DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 284 520 HE 020 650

AUTHOR Floyd, Carol E.
TITLE Faculty Participation in Decision Making. ERIC Digest.
INSTITUTION Association for the Study of Higher Education.; ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Educational Research and Improvement (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO EDO-HE-86-3
PUB DATE 86
CONTRACT 400-86-0017
NOTE 3p.; This digest is a summary of "Faculty Participation in Decision Making: Necessity or Luxury?" (ED 267 694).
AVAILABLE FROM ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, George Washington University, One Dupont Circle, Suite 630, Washington, DC 20036 (free with stamped, self-addressed envelope).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses - ERIC Information Analysis Products (071) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Administration; *College Faculty; *College Governing Councils; Faculty College Relationship; Higher Education; *Participative Decision Making; *Policy Formation; *Teacher Administrator Relationship; *Teacher Participation
IDENTIFIERS ERIC Digests

ABSTRACT

Faculty participation in college or university decision making is accepted as intrinsically good and as having positive effects on institutional functioning, but it is reflected in varying degrees in actual practice. The rationale for faculty participation is related to increased employee satisfaction and performance; faculty also tend to afford legitimacy and to fully cooperate in the implementation of only those policies they have helped formulate. Academic senates are useful mechanisms but are more influential at research universities or elite liberal arts colleges than at other institutions. Historically, faculty have had the broadest role in curricular and faculty personnel matters, but there are increased roles in institutional planning and administrator selection and evaluation as well. Involvement in budgeting and retrenchment has been limited. Administrators can focus energies on four elements: strengthening collegial foundations of decision making; shaping the consultative framework; increasing the availability of information; and facilitating group deliberation. Coordinated efforts of administrators and faculty are necessary to increase the extrinsic rewards for constructive institutional participation. (LB)

ERIC DIGEST

EDO-HE-86-3

ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education The George Washington University One Dupont Circle, Suite 630 Washington, D.C. 20036

ED284520

Faculty Participation in Decision Making

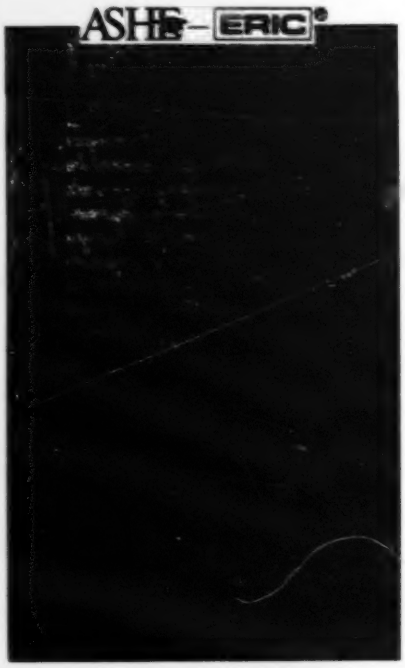
Carol E. Floyd, Illinois Board of Regents

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy



HE 020 650

Faculty participation in institutional decision making is accepted as intrinsically good and as having positive effects on institutional functioning, but it is reflected in varying degrees in actual practice. Neither faculty nor administrators have been very satisfied with the actual patterns of participation or the effectiveness of that participation. Faculty seek to protect and to reinvigorate historical mechanisms like academic senates and the well-established areas of curriculum and faculty tenure and promotion. They also seek mechanisms and approaches for establishing a significant role in areas where little participation historically has occurred. Sympathetic to faculty frustrations about participation, administrators seek ways to more fully integrate consultation with faculty into decision-making processes. Faculty and administrators are frustrated by the paucity of intrinsic and extrinsic satisfactions of faculty participation and seek ways to increase the rewards of that participation. Perceiving that many significant decisions are being made above the campus level, faculty now increasingly are concerned about mechanisms for participation at the system level in multicampus systems and at the state level.

What Is the Rationale for Faculty Participation?

The rationale for extensive faculty participation in institutional decision making rests on reasons for employees' participation in any organization and on reasons specific to the faculty role in higher education, the former contained in the sizeable literature on generic organization theory and the latter in the more sparse higher education literature. Participation in institutional decision making is associated with increased employee satisfaction and performance in a wide variety of organizations. Employees' satisfaction and the quality of work life are now also increasingly viewed as valued outcomes in their own right. Faculty expertise on the subjects on which decisions are to be made is perhaps the most fundamental factor supporting faculty participation in institutional decision making. But faculty also tend to accord legitimacy to and fully cooperate in the implementation of only those policies that faculty have helped formulate because they believe faculty have a right to participate. Although participatory leadership models require a number of preconditions, these preconditions are met in higher education environments more frequently than in other organizational settings.

How Do Academic Senates Serve in Campuswide Decision Making?

Faculty senates and faculty senate committees continue to be useful mechanisms for faculty participation at many research universities, at other universities, and at elite liberal arts colleges with regard to core academic areas like curriculum and faculty tenure and promotion, but they are not necessarily as influential at other types of higher education institutions. Senates are more representative of a cross-section of faculty in the 1980s than they were in the 1960s, the result of increased use of elected representatives and more democratic selecting procedures for committees. Faculty are less comfortable, however, with the involvement of nonfaculty constituencies in the revised senate structures established in the late 1960s and early 1970s and continue to seek means to minimize the influence of those constituencies. Collective bargaining has not significantly affected the functioning of coexisting senates in core academic areas on most campuses, but a number of factors are likely to lead to unstable senate/union relations in the future.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What Are the New Challenges to Faculty Participation?

Faculty historically have the broadest role and greatest influence on matters of curriculum and faculty personnel (especially tenure and promotion). The literature suggests, however, that these patterns may be difficult to maintain unless faculty are willing to address issues of general education, staffing flexibility, and some aspects of faculty conduct from a broader perspective. The resolution of these issues is central to faculty credibility and institutional viability.

Within the past 15 years, faculty participation has also become relatively well accepted in institutional planning and in the selection and evaluation of administrators at many institutions. Faculty participation is a significant element in the process by which presidents are selected and a normative factor against which presidential candidates are evaluated. Faculty ambivalence about integrating financial with academic factors, which has tended to restrict faculty participation and influence in some stages of planning, has also begun to recede. Healthy debates about the best mechanisms for integrating faculty participation into strategic planning suggest good prospects for balance between administrative leadership and broad participation as such approaches are actually implemented.

Although faculty involvement in budgeting and (in adverse circumstances) in retrenchment has historically been limited by both administrative resistance and faculty ambivalence, groundwork is being laid on many campuses for greater and more effective faculty participation. Faculty have begun to take steps, in conjunction with administrators, to gain a better understanding of the technical bases and political dynamics of the budgetary process, thus reducing an earlier handicap. Boards of trustees and university administrators are also becoming more sophisticated about the importance of process considerations in handling retrenchment and the greater acceptability of retrenchment measures if faculty are consulted about procedures and implementation.

What Steps Can Administrators Take?

Administrators increasingly see themselves as managers of an institutional decision process and focus their energies on four crucial elements: strengthening the collegial foundations of decision making, shaping the consultative framework, increasing the availability of information, and facilitating group deliberation.

The articulation of a set of shared values and goals is central to strengthening the collegial foundations of decision making in higher education. In 1984 and 1985, a number of national blue ribbon commissions helped focus campus attention on the need to clarify the purposes of the undergraduate curriculum, with special emphasis on general education. Further, some scholars have suggested that Theory Z and other Japanese management approaches can help focus attention on a collegially oriented administrative style, while others have raised issues about some of the negative implications of Theory Z on the campus.

The higher education literature of the last 10 years reflects a growing consensus about the characteristics of and an adequate framework for administrative consultation with faculty. A set of understandings has evolved about where very broad consultation is useful and where the extent of consultation is appropriately more limited. Agreement has also been reached that every effort should be made to maintain process and procedure, even in crises.

Various approaches and means for administrators to make information relevant to campus-generated decisions more available to faculty consultative groups have been identified in the higher education literature. A national resource center for faculty participation in institutional decision making has been identified as a possible mechanism for providing a base of knowledge about best institutional practices.

Faculty and administrators can call upon a sizable literature on generic organization theory to gain useful insights to improve group deliberations. That literature illuminates various aspects of group decision making, including task-oriented leadership and group maintenance leadership, patterns of sharing group leadership, obstacles to rational evaluation of alternative decisions, and suggestions for improving group decision making.

What Steps Can Increase Faculty Satisfaction in Campuswide Decision Making?

The higher education literature contains a number of suggestions as to how institutions might increase the intrinsic satisfactions of and extrinsic rewards for institutional participation. Suggestions for increasing intrinsic satisfactions include providing faculty participants a better understanding of the dynamics of the consultative process and setting terms of committee service to correspond with the beginning and ending of major projects. Coordinated efforts of administrators and faculty are necessary to increase the extrinsic rewards for constructive institutional participation, thus reversing the pattern of very little weight given by most institutional personnel committees to institutional or public service, a pattern most accentuated in research universities.

What are Possible Alternate Mechanisms at System and State Levels?

Formal faculty participation at the system and state levels can take the form of direct membership on the board itself, a formal systemwide senate or statewide committee, or participation in ad hoc and standing technical committees. The mechanisms of a systemwide senate in multicampus systems or a statewide coordinating board, have been of the strongest interest both in theory and in practice.

From ED 267 694

Selected References

Order ERIC documents by "ED" number from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service, 3900 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304. Specify paper copy (PC) or microfiche (MF) and number of pages.

Austin, Ann E., and Gamson, Zelda F. 1983 *Academic Workplace: New Demands, Heightened Tensions.* ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Research Report No. 10. Washington, D.C.: Association for the Study of Higher Education. 131 pp. ED 243 397. MF-$.97; PC-$12.96.

Berdahl, Robert O., and Gove, Samuel K. May/June 1982. "Governing Higher Education: Faculty Roles on State Boards." *Academe* 68: 21-24.

Millett, John C. 1978. *New Structures of Campus Power: Success and Failures of Emerging Forms of Institutional Governance.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mortimer, Kenneth P., and McConnell, T.R. 1978. *Sharing Authority Effectively.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Powers, David R., and Powers, Mary F. 1983. *Making Participatory Management Work.* San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.

Spitzberg, Irving J., Jr. September/ October 1984. "Governing the Futures of Higher Education: Report of the General Secretary." *Academe* 70: 13a-20a.

Vroom, Victor H. Summer 1983. "Leaders and Leadership in Academe." *Review of Higher Education* 6: 367-86.

Yukl, Gary A. 1981. *Leadership in Organizations.* Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

OERI Office of Educational Research and Improvement U.S. Department of Education

This publication was partially prepared with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under contract no. 400-86-0011. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of OERI or the Department.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE